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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SUBJECT Types of Armament in the Bulgarian Army

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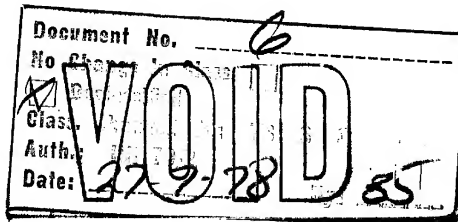
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1. Until 1945 the Bulgarian Army was equipped largely with weapons of German manufacture. These weapons were as follows:
 - a. Pistol - Parabellum, Walther, Sauer and Mauser.
 - b. Rifle - Mannlicher 1895 model (Austrian).
 - c. Light machine gun - Bren and Madsen.
 - d. Sub-machine gun - Schneiser.
 - e. Heavy machine gun - Maxim and MG-34.
 - f. Mortar - Rheinmetal, 81 mm.
 - g. Anti-tank gun - 3.7 and 5 cm. Krupp or Rheinmetal.
 - h. Tanks - Skoda, Renault and German Mark IV.
 - i. Aircraft - Messerschmidt, Fokker-Wolfe and Heinkel.
 - j. Artillery Guns - 7.5 mm. Schneider and Krupp; 105 mm. and 150 mm., new German type; 8.8 cm. anti-aircraft; 7.5 cm. Bofors mountain cannon; 2 cm. anti-aircraft gun, Solothurn; 2 cm. anti-tank gun, Solothurn.
2. After conclusion of the last war, the army weapons were slowly changed to Soviet models. The change-over was accelerated after June 1948 when the Tito-Cominform schism took place.
3. At the present time the Bulgarian Army is equipped as follows:
 - a. Pistol - Parabellum, Mauser, Walther and Sauer (7.65 and 9 mm. weapons).
 - b. Rifle - Soviet 7.62 with attached bayonet. At the present time some regiments, especially reserve regiments and regiments stationed in the interior of the country, have not been equipped with the new rifles. The old weapons are distributed to the Militia and forest guards; the



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balance is stored for use of the Communist Party and the "auxiliary militia" which is made up primarily of Communist Party members.

- c. Sub-machine gun - Soviet type with small circular drum on top which feeds 72 cartridges into the gun. The Border Guards, Militia and some units within the infantry are armed with this weapon.
- d. Light machine gun - Soviet Degtyarov with bipod in front. Each squad in the infantry platoon has one such machine gun. Some of the units still have the Bren gun.
- e. Heavy machine gun - Soviet Maxim mounted on two-wheel carts. These guns are water cooled and fire belts of 150 to 200 cartridges. All former heavy machine guns have been replaced. A portion of the old weapons were turned over to Greek guerrillas and the other portion sent to the USSR.
- f. Anti-tank rifle - 1.4 cm. long barreled rifle for use in close quarters with armored vehicles.
- g. Mortar - no changes have been made and units still use the old type.
- h. Anti-tank gun - Soviet model Rheinmetal, 4.7 and 5 cm., split trails. All units have been equipped with the new gun.
- i. Anti-aircraft machine gun - 12.7 mm. Soviet model. Up to now issued to only First and Second Armies.
- j. Anti-aircraft gun - 3.7 Zenitka. Issued to all anti-aircraft artillery regiments.
- k. Self-propelled artillery - 7.6 Zis. Issued to only certain units in First and Second Armies.
- l. Artillery pieces - Almost all former cannons have been changed over to the new Soviet weapons. Replacements have been as follows:
 - (1) 7.5 Schmeiser with 7.62 Soviet model.
 - (2) 10.5 cm. with 12.2 cm. Soviet model.
 - (3) 15 cm. with 15.5 cm. Soviet model.
- m. New units are being formed in the artillery equipped with Katyushas, rockets and heavy mortars (above 15 cm.). The Coast Artillery still has weapons issued during 1917 which had been taken by the Germans as war trophies from the fortress of Lwow, Poland.
- n. Armor - T-34 tanks and Soviet Broniford armored cars. At present there are about 450 T-34 tanks and 50 Bronifords in the army.
- 4. Munitions for rifles, light machine guns and heavy machine guns are being produced in sufficient quantity in Bulgarian military munitions factories. This also includes munitions for pistols and revolvers.
- 5. The Soviets are furnishing a limited amount of ammunition with all new weapons given to the Bulgarian Army. This ammunition is not sufficient for either combat or field training and usually consists of only a few rounds for testing.
- 6. Spare parts are in extremely short supply and are stored only in army or higher headquarters. The new Soviet weapons have no spare parts and replacement parts must be ordered from the USSR. Cannibalizing is practiced throughout the entire army.

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